

AX-16-001-0219



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

AUG 01 2016

The Honorable Anthony Copeland
4527 Indianapolis Boulevard
East Chicago, Indiana 46312

Dear Mayor Copeland:

Thank you for your July 14, 2016 letter to Administrator McCarthy regarding the West Calumet Housing Complex located in the USS Lead Superfund site in East Chicago, Indiana.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's core mission is to protect human health and the environment. Our response actions at the West Calumet Housing Complex proceed with that objective in mind. We are addressing the most urgent concerns first and will be devoting considerable resources to address all aspects of site cleanup. Since your earlier June 16, 2016 letter, we have expedited interim response action work at the housing complex to reduce residents' exposure to lead-contaminated soils, and have taken the following immediate actions including:

- Immediate notice to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and coordination with ATSDR and the City of East Chicago Health Department and other city representatives;
- Educated residents about steps they can take to reduce exposure to lead, including door-to-door outreach, flyer distribution on lead dangers and EPA's site operations, and installation of informational signs in the neighborhood (ongoing);
- Implemented response measures to cover areas of exposed soil at the housing complex and nearby playground (completed July 22 with ongoing maintenance);
- Notified residents within the West Calumet Housing Complex of EPA's soil sampling results, with copies provided to the city and East Chicago Housing Authority (ECHA) (July 8, 11 and 12);
- Coordinated with the ECHA on revisions to their mowing and other maintenance practices to reduce the creation of dust (July 15 and ongoing);
- Launched a website on the West Calumet Housing Complex to provide up-to-date information about progress of the response action work at the site (July 19 and ongoing);
- Planned indoor dust and lead paint sampling at residences and Carrie Gosch Elementary School in coordination with ATSDR and the Indiana Department of Health (beginning August 1);
- Planned soil sampling in residential yards in Zone 2;

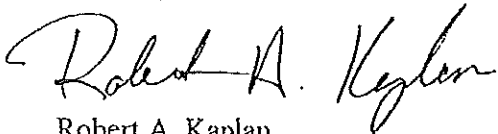
- Planned installation of outdoor air monitors;
- Enhanced communications with the city and ECHA by providing daily activity reports and conducting twice weekly teleconferences with the City, ECHA and federal government attorneys.

In addition, EPA is having discussions with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regarding the potential relocation of residents. We support the relocation of residents of WCHC, and are working on options on an urgent basis.

I understand your concern about when EPA shared the data collected during the remedial design sampling process. I am committed to more effectively sharing information with you moving forward to constructively and collaboratively address environmental and public health issues and concerns at the site.

Again, thank you for your letter. If you have further questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Eileen Deamer or Ronna Beckmann, the Region 5 Congressional Liaisons, at (312) 886-3000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert A. Kaplan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Robert A. Kaplan
Acting Regional Administrator